THE SENTINEL
OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Flight Line Safety

The flightline is a high risk area that is full of high energy sources that can produce disaster, if uncontrolled. Some of these sources include propellers, fuel, chemicals, electricity, high pressure air and pressurized containers.

A safe aircraft would probably come equipped with hand rails and wings high enough to walk under without bumping your head. Unfortunately, we have to tolerate such things as blade antennas, pitot tubes, propellers, leading edges and static discharge wicks. With all this in mind, we operate daily in a very hazardous environment. Being able to reduce these hazards requires everyone's strict attention to safety.

As you remember from your training, the 5 M factors of Man-Machine-Medium-Mission-Management come into play on the flight line. These are all factors in the accident versus safety flightline equation. Flightline safety is a people, not equipment, problem. Propellers are hazardous; It is our responsibility, however, to avoid becoming up front and personal with one. The same for those cute little diamond scars on many a pilot's forehead. Ask any pilot and they will tell you how to get one of your own.

To increase the effect of these hazards, how about inserting weather into the mix? We may not always have rain, snow, ice or wind, but we can usually count on heat, cold and darkness. Adding any of these not only magnifies the difficulty of our tasks, but also our exposure to injury.

As you probably now realize, we are speaking of the dreaded "Human Factor." I am sure you have heard all the buzz words of fatigue, complacency, haste, distraction and the pressure of time constraints.

Now that we have spoken of the problem and causes, what about a solution? Our ES qualified flightline personnel must be fully trained in both their job and in flightline safety. Every flightline job, from the easiest to the most complex, requires some level of safety training. We must make sure this training is thoroughly given and, more importantly, understood. You may be saving the life of this very trainee. Be thorough, be understanding, but be safe.

How about Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)? Does the IC issue or make sure that everyone has earplugs, gloves and most of all water; water not only for themselves, but for the pilots and crews. Hydration is very important both in the summer and in the winter. Remember, in the winter air does not contain as much water and you may still suffer from dehydration.

Col Lyle E. Letteer, CAP
National Safety Officer

Severe Weather Driving

With severe storm season approaching, lets review what to do when faced with severe weather conditions while out on the road. There are general practices that can be helpful in any type of emergency.

Every safe trip begins with a thorough pre-trip inspection of the vehicle. This is important in good weather, but your brakes, lights, windshield wipers, tires, and other equipment can be critical in severe weather.

Severe thunderstorm season begins in March; however, it is important to note that these storms can, occur at any time of the year. Remember the tornados in northern Illinois a couple of months ago? Always be on the alert for severe weather. Consider taking a severe weather spotter course from your local National Weather Service office or Emergency Management Agency.

Vans and SUVs are particularly vulnerable to high winds. Pay attention to official weather statements regarding wind and be prepared to pull over and wait it out.

Fog is the number one cause of catastrophic multi-vehicle accidents. It is the most common road visibility problem.

Every corporate vehicle is required to have a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit. Know how to use these tools in the event of an emergency. Educating yourself on the hazards that you may face on the road and what to do about them is a necessary part of being a CAP driver. Be alert during changing weather conditions and know how to react quickly. Pre-trip inspections, reducing speed, increased following distance and the ability to obtain current weather information are keys to a safe, productive trip. Remember, an emergency may not be a disaster if you are prepared for it.

Resources.

- Department of Homeland Security: www.nhtsa.gov
- Federal Emergency Management Agency: www.fema.gov
- National Weather Service: www.nws.noaa.gov
- United States Road Conditions: www.usroadconditions.com
- Weather Channel: www.weather.com

Capt Karen Tones, GLR-IL-001

This article appeared in the Apr 07 Illinois Wing Safety Pins. The entire Safety Pins may be viewed at http://ilcap.org/safety/Safety.htm

Reporting Wildlife Aircraft Strikes

FAA Advisory Circular 150/5200-32A explains the importance of reporting collisions between aircraft and wildlife, more commonly referred to as wildlife strikes. Over the last few months, several CAP aircraft have suffered bird strikes with varying amounts of damage. Luckily we have had no bodily injuries from these incidents.

It is always a safe practice to verify any attractants that may be surrounding airfields such as trash or garbage dumps or landfills that may attract wildlife. Also ask the tower if there have been any recent reports of wildlife.

Col Lyle E. Letteer, CAP
National Safety Officer

What is the Purpose of a Safety Inspection

Safety inspections serve two purposes; they determine the level of compliance with regulations and they validate the effectiveness of the safety program. Every Commander needs to be interested in the level of Safety program compliance and knowing that the program is actually accomplishing something.

Col Lyle E. Letteer, CAP
National Safety Officer

Morality and Safety

While attending the Texas Wing Conference, one of the chaplains approached me and wanted to discuss her views on the moral obligation CAP members have towards one another. Not wanting to argue or disagree with any person of the "cloth", I listened intently to the Chaplain's comments and realized how right she is. The Chaplain talked about the moral obligation we each have to not only keep ourselves from harm, but to keep our fellow CAP members from harm's way as well. How do we do that?

The answer is simply that a moral obligation is to always do the right thing. Morality is the standard of conduct that is generally accepted as right or proper behavior. It is behavior that is conducted in accord with acceptable moral standards. It is that moral behavior that sets the tone for a positive safety culture.

How that relates to safety is your making the right decisions before you take on a task or involve yourself with other CAP members. Take the example of a cadet orientation flight. You have a moral obligation for the cadet's safety, the care of the CAP property and yourself. You should be asking if you are properly fit for the flight. Have you met all currency requirements and more importantly feel that you have maintained your own level of proficiency and training for flying? Is the weather within safe limits for winds, clouds and visibility? Is the airplane in proper working order and met all requirements of a safe flight (etc, etc, etc)? The cadet doesn't know if you are safe at this very moment, only you can know and that's the blind trust we all have in each other.

We can expand our moral obligations to any activity in CAP by measuring our commitment to always doing the right thing. Doing the right thing may help mitigate the risk of our activities. Doing the right thing includes staying proficient and accomplishing your training in an honest and effective manner. Following the regulations and recommendations given by your safety officer. Keeping your ego in check and knowing when to step back if it interferes with good judgment. It's a matter of being honest with yourself and keeping your moral integrity high; for doing so keeps you and your fellow CAP members safer.

I thank that Texas chaplain for sharing her views on safety and morality. Just as with teaching right versus wrong, it is important we all keep morality in the forefront of our safety lessons.

Lt Col Larry Mattiello, CAP
Assistant National Safety Officer, Air

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Please consider writing an Emergency Evacuation Plan for your meeting facility. By making this a safety program for everyone in your unit, both senior and cadet, you will be helping to make safety a mindset for your entire unit.

Consideration should be given to *emergency telephone numbers *building emergency escape routes *location of fire extinguishers *location of first aid kit *location of the defibrillator (AED) *operation and location of all emergency illumination *outside meeting location in case of evacuation *verification of personnel count once outside.

These are just a few ideas for your Emergency Evacuation Plan. It would be impossible and should not even be attempted to cover every possible emergency situation. In this plan, just be sure to cover the basics. Also, post this plan on the wall in a conspicuous place where it is readily visible.

Lt Col Brenda Allison, CAP
Assistant National Safety Officer, Ground

Summary of Form 78 Accidents and Incidents Received for March 2008

Aircraft

Aborted takeoff due to engine not achieving full power.
Prop strike in muddy grass.
Taxi collision wing-on-wing.
Runway incursion.
Three occurrences of precautionary landings due to engine running rough.
Glider rudder damage discovered at maintenance shop.
Precautionary landing due to loss of engine power during power-off stall.
Bird strikes on two different aircraft.
Propeller nick.
Contacted fence while parking aircraft.

Vehicle

At traffic light stop, foot slipped off brake and bumped rear of vehicle in front.

Bodily Injury

SM received water burn when reaching to turn off burner.
Cadet pushed hard on exit door and cut elbow.
Cadet passed out in formation and required stitches.